Successful Transitions from Elementary to Post-Secondary (STEPS)

Dear Parents/Guardians:

Thank you for your interest in the Successful Transition from Elementary to Post-Secondary (STEPS) program offered by the Regional Assessment and Resource Centre (RARC) at Queen's University. STEPS is a program for students with neurodevelopmental conditions affecting learning (including learning disabilities and ADHD). Applications to the STEPS program are assessed during the Grade 7 year, and programming commences in the fall of Grade 8 and continues until the student attends Grade 9.

Our experience of over 15 years running this program has taught us that by providing students, their parents, and teachers with a deeper understanding of the student's learning profile and challenges, it increases the chances of students succeeding in secondary school and beyond.

There is no cost for the intervention sessions. However, all students need a recent psychoeducational assessment to participate in this program. If you do not have a recent one, RARC will schedule one. The cost is $2,000, and we offer flexible payment options over a 1-year period. Please see the attached Financial Contract form for full details.

To hear from former students and parents, click on STEPS Testimonials.

STEPS Virtual Information Zoom Sessions will run on:
Tuesday, November 24, 2026, at 6:00pm – 7:00pm; and
Tuesday, January 26, 2027, at 6:00pm – 7:00pm

Click here to access the Zoom Meeting Link
Or join with Meeting ID: 975 5663 5697
Passcode: 617242

For students accepted into STEPS, the program provides:

- An updated psychoeducational assessment
- Student intervention sessions focusing on self-advocacy and self-esteem
- Parent training sessions
- Summer high school transition program (includes assistive technology training)

Eligibility Requirements:

- Must apply for the program during the fall/winter of their Grade 7 year
- Have impairments in academic achievement (when no accommodations are provided)
- Be previously diagnosed with a relevant disability (e.g., a learning disability, ADHD), or have a history that strongly suggests a relevant disability

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Acceptance in the STEPS Program:

There is a limited number of spaces in the STEPS program each year. Applications will be screened and scored to determine acceptance into the program. Families will be notified of status by March 31, 2027.

The Psychoeducational Assessment

Traditionally, each student who is accepted to the program will receive a psychoeducational assessment in Grade 7, unless they have had a comprehensive assessment in the past two years. Having an updated assessment is a critical part of this program, and incredibly valuable to starting Grade 9 with up-to-date learning and accommodation information in place for students. The detailed and comprehensive assessment consists of cognitive and academic testing by RARC practitioners.

Participation in the assessment involves the following elements:

- Completion of a background questionnaire and writing sample
- Submission of relevant academic and clinical records
- Virtual intake interview and consent appointment (1-2 hours)
- Attendance of student at **2 in-person testing sessions of approximately 3 hours each**
- 1-hour virtual feedback meeting with the family

All testing sessions take place in-person during office hours. Following the testing and feedback meeting, parents will be given written reports which they may choose to share with the school. The cost of the psychoeducational assessment is $2,000.

STEPS Programming

Students and parents will participate in sessions during the Grade 8 year. The programming will be as follows:

- **Fall 2027 & Spring 2028:** Students will participate in group intervention sessions with the focus on increasing self-esteem and self-advocacy skills. Parents will increase their knowledge around learning differences and develop specific strategies to support their child. Both fall and spring sessions will be held on Queen's main campus. These typically run on Tuesday evenings, but this is dependent on room availability at Queen's.

- **Summer 2028:** Students will attend a one-week day camp to prepare for the transition to high school. This camp is typically run at a Kingston high school. During this camp, students will explore a variety of assistive technology, practice the rotary system, hear from current high school students, and celebrate their journey through the STEPS program. Subject to our host high school's availability, this typically runs in the second or third week of July.

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Interested in Applying to the STEPS Program

Please complete the **Application Form**, **Background Information Questionnaire** and **Financial Contract** (if previous assessment is more than two years old), found on pages 4 through 14, and return these to your child's Special Education teacher along with the **Teacher Contact Form** as soon as possible. We also need **all specialist assessment reports** (psychoeducational, occupational therapy, speech language, psychiatric, etc.), **report cards from each year**, and the **most current Individual Educational Plan**. With your permission, school personnel will copy the above documents and send them to RARC staff.

You can choose to send all the above documentation directly rather than going through your child's school. Please refer to the Teacher Contact Form to see what additional documentation is required with your application package. Given the volume of applications, please ensure your package is complete before submitting it.

Completed Application Packages – Methods of Delivery to RARC

- Email to steps@queensu.ca (for security and confidentiality, please password protect all files, or send securely through SecureDocs.ca)
- Fax to 613-533-6564
- In-person during RARC operating hours (Monday-Thursday between 9am to 12pm or 1pm to 4pm). **Please note that our office will be closed for the holidays from December 21, 2026, through January 1, 2027 (inclusive).**

You can expect confirmation of receipt of packages within 10 business days. Please reach out if you have not received confirmation that we have received your package after 10 business days.

Applications must be submitted by February 28, 2027. All families will be notified of their status by the end of March 2027.

Please contact me at steps@queensu.ca if you have any questions. If needed, a phone call can be arranged.

Sincerely,



Gillian Goldsmith, OCT, B.Ed
STEPS Program Coordinator, Regional Assessment and Resource Centre

STEPS Application Form

This application form is to be completed by the parent or guardian.

To be considered for the STEPS Program, the student must meet the following criteria below:
(Please select all that apply)

- ☐ Student has a diagnosis of a learning disability or ADHD, or history that suggests disability is present
- ☐ Student has impairments in academic achievement and requires accommodations
- ☐ Student is currently in Grade 7

If you selected all of the above, please proceed with the rest of the application. Complete applications include:

- ☐ STEPS Application Form
- ☐ Background Questionnaire
- ☐ Writing Sample
- ☐ IEP
- ☐ End of Year Report Cards from K-6
- ☐ Psychoeducational Assessment (if applicable)
- ☐ Financial form
- ☐ Teacher Contact Form

Hard copies will be shredded after review of application unless indicated below to return to applicant.

☐ Yes, I would like hard copies to be returned to primary contact.

Please return the completed application form to the Special Education teacher, for them to forward to the STEPS Coordinator. You can choose to send the application package directly, if preferred. Please review the required documentation listed at the top of this form to ensure the application is complete.

Completed packages may be sent to us through the Secure Docs system to steps@queensu.ca. If you would like to drop the package off in-person, please only do so during operating hours: Monday - Thursday between 9:00am-12pm or 1pm-4:00pm. If you deliver in-person, please do not leave outside the office doors. Packages must be handed over to a staff member at RARC directly. **Please note our office will be closed for the holidays from December 21, 2026, through January 1, 2027 (inclusive).** You may also wish to send them directly by fax to 613-533-6564. You can expect confirmation of receipt of packages within 10 business days. If you do not receive this, please contact the STEPS Coordinator at steps@queensu.ca.

We will accept applications until February 28, 2027. Due to a limited number of spaces, not all students who meet eligibility requirements will be accepted into the program.

CONSENT

I support my child's participation in the program for the 2026-2028 school years. I agree that copies of my child's IEP, report cards, and assessment reports may be copied from the Ontario Student Record (OSR) and provided to personnel at the Regional Assessment and Resource Centre at Queen's University.

Child's Full Name: _____

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____ Date: _____

Information About the Student

First and Last Name of Student: _____

Date of Birth (mm/dd/yyyy): _____Gender: _____ Preferred Pronouns: _____

Current Elementary School: _____

Expected High School: _____

Is this child adopted? ☐ Yes ☐ No If yes, age at adoption? _____

Information About Parent(s)/Guardian(s)

Parent/Guardian 1 (Primary Contact)

First and Last Name of Parent/Guardian: _____

Relationship to the Child: _____ Email Address: _____

Preferred Phone Number: _____ ☐ Cell ☐ Home ☐ Work

Home Address:

_____

(House/Apartment Number and Street Name) (City/Town) (Postal Code)

Parent/Guardian 2

First and Last Name of Parent/Guardian: _____

Relationship to the Child: _____ Email Address: _____

Preferred Phone Number: _____ ☐ Cell ☐ Home ☐ Work

Home Address: ☐ *Same as above*

_____

(House/Apartment Number and Street Name) (City/Town) (Postal Code)

Child is Living With: _____

Status of Parent's Relationship:

☐ Married (How Long? _____years)
☐ Never Married
☐ Separated (Child's Age at Separation _____)
☐ Divorced (Child's Age at Divorce _____)
☐ Single
☐ Widowed

Please indicate whether there are stepparents:

Stepparent Name: _____

Stepparent Name: _____

Background Information Questionnaire

The space provided for your answers to questions 1 through 28 is limited. If you require more space, please use the last page in this questionnaire to add additional details that you wish to include.

1. Who is completing this form? What is your relationship to the student?

2. What problems or questions have caused you to seek help for your child at this time? What would you like to gain out of your child's participation in our program?

3. What interventions/strategies have you already used to address these problems? What was the outcome?

Academic

4. Current teacher (if multiple, who knows the student the best):

5. Past schools attended:

6. Please describe any academic challenges experienced at school.

7. Please describe any behavioural or psychological difficulties experienced at school.

8. Has your child been previously assessed?

   ☐ Yes ☐ No

   If yes, when and by whom?

Medical/Developmental

9. Were there any abnormalities in terms of pregnancy or delivery?

10. Were motor or language developmental milestones attained within normative expectations? If not, what delays were observed?

11. Has your child received occupational therapy, speech and/or language therapy, or physiotherapy? If yes, please indicate what they received treatments for and when.

12. Have any major injuries been sustained (including concussion)? ☐ Yes ☐ No
    Details (if yes):

13. Has your child experienced any major illnesses? ☐ Yes ☐ No
    Details (if yes):

14. Have there been any surgeries or hospitalizations? ☐ Yes ☐ No
    If yes, when and for what condition?

15. Are there any issues with vision or hearing? ☐ Yes ☐ No
    If yes, please explain:

16. Does your child take any regular medications? If so, what medications, at what dosages, and for what conditions? Please fill in the table below.

Medication	Dosage	Condition

17. Are there concerns regarding sleep or appetite?

Family/Social

18. Please indicate place of birth and primary language spoken within the home. Are there any other languages spoken within the home?

19. Family composition – who lives in the home? Please note the ages of any siblings. If applicable, what are the current custody and access arrangements?

20. Please list the current educational status (such as completed high school, completed a college diploma or university degree, completed graduate studies, etc.) and current job title for **biological** parents.

Parent	Educational Status	Current Job Title

21. Has anyone in the immediate family or extended family experienced learning challenges, attentional issues, mental health difficulties? If so, who and what difficulties have they experienced?

22. Please describe any social/interpersonal challenges experienced.

23. Please list any extracurricular activities.

Psychological/Behavioural

24. Please check all that apply regarding your child:

- ☐ Depression/sadness
- ☐ Changes in eating or sleeping habits
- ☐ Feelings of worthlessness, hopelessness, or low self-esteem
- ☐ Suicidal ideation or behaviours
- ☐ Anxiety/nervousness
- ☐ Excessive fears or phobias
- ☐ Nightmares
- ☐ Recurrent intrusive thoughts
- ☐ Poor frustration tolerance
- ☐ Explosive anger
- ☐ Aggressive/violent
- ☐ Destroys other people's property
- ☐ Mean to animals
- ☐ Other: _____
- ☐ Mean to people
- ☐ Steals
- ☐ Lies easily
- ☐ Skips school
- ☐ Rapid mood changes
- ☐ Euphoria (feel on top of the world)
- ☐ Visual or auditory hallucinations
- ☐ Toileting accidents
- ☐ Inattentive
- ☐ Easily distracted
- ☐ Restless/difficulty sitting still
- ☐ Impulsive
- ☐ Exhibits sexually inappropriate behaviour

25. Please describe any major family or parental stressors or event that may have impacted your child in the past or that may impact him or her now (please give details, include incidents you feel were traumatic for this particular child, though they might not have been for another child):

26. Please list any previous experiences with Psychologists, Psychiatrists, Social Workers, and/or Counselors:

Therapist Name	Dates of Treatment	Details

☐ My child has never had any psychological therapy or counselling.

27. Please note any additional concerns or information that you feel is pertinent to know regarding your child that has not been covered in this questionnaire:

Writing Sample. Please have your child hand write a short story or 'essay' on a topic of their choice (i.e., favourite sport, video game, activity, etc.). They may write about anything, but it **must be printed or written in cursive** (i.e., not typed) on this page. Click on the box below to insert a picture/file of the sample.

Additional Space

Please use this space to add any comments or information for questions 1-27 as you need (if you did not have enough space with what was provided). Please indicate the question number(s) your comments are in relation to.

STEPS Financial Contract

Students accepted into the STEPS program will be scheduled for a psychoeducational assessment in order to get an updated learning profile. The cost of the assessment is $2,000. If the student has a recent (2 years or less) assessment, this financial contract is not required as they will not need an assessment. If you are not sure if your student will need one, please contact the STEPS coordinator at steps@queensu.ca.

Do you have private insurance coverage that covers psychological services/assessments? *Once you have committed to a payment option and payment is received (post-dated cheques are acceptable), RARC will provide a detailed receipt for families to submit to their insurance company.*	
☐ Yes	☐ No

Payment Options

Please note: Cheques are payable to Queen's University. RARC accepts Visa, Mastercard, and Debit. Upon request, e-transfer requests can be sent to the provided primary contact email.

☐ **Option # 1:**

Pay Full Fee (**$2,000**)

RARC provides the option for you to pay the full fee in one lump sum.

I will pay the full fee by: ☐ debit/credit ☐ cheque ☐ e-transfer

☐ **Option # 2:**

Installment Plan (approximately **$167 x 12 months**)

RARC offers STEPS families the option to pay for the assessment over a 1-year period which can be paid by either debit/credit, cheque, and/or e-transfer.

*If you wish to provide a down payment, monthly installments will be lowered accordingly.

I understand and agree to the following terms and conditions:

I will pay the full cost of the psychoeducational assessment through the means indicated on this form (installment plan, or full fee). If I withdraw from the STEPS program, I understand that I am still responsible and accountable for the remaining payments for my child's psychoeducational assessment.

Student's Name: _____

Parent/Guardian Name: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Teacher Information for STEPS Program

To be completed by the resource teacher (or classroom teacher)

Over the course of the STEPS program, we will very occasionally need to contact the classroom and/or resource teacher in order to provide updates about the status of this application and in order for teachers to complete short questionnaires as part of the student's psychoeducational assessment. Please include your preferred method of contact below:

Resource/Special Education Teacher: _____

☐ **E-mail Address:** _____

☐ **Phone # :** _____

Classroom Teacher: _____

☐ **E-mail Address:** _____

☐ **Phone # :** _____

The following must be included along with this application form in order for this application to be processed.

☐ **Application form and background information questionnaire completed by the student's parent(s)/guardian(s)**

☐ **Teacher information form completed by resource or classroom teacher**

☐ **Copies of the student's final/ end of year report card from each grade (from Kindergarten on)**

☐ **Copy of the student's most recent Individual Education Plan (IEP)**

☐ **Copies of all specialist reports (e.g., psychoeducational, speech-language, OT)**

Please send the package to:

STEPS Program
RARC, Queen's University
Mackintosh Corry Hall, Room B100
68 University Avenue
Kingston, ON K7L 3N6

Completed packages can be sent by fax, email, mail, or dropped off in person directly to a RARC employee. Electronic packages should be password protected and sent to steps@queensu.ca via the Secure Docs website. Packages can be dropped off in person to a RARC employee during work hours (Monday to Thursday, 9am-12pm or 1pm-4pm). Please note our office will be closed for the holidays from December 21st, 2026 through January 1st, 2027 (inclusive). Families can expect confirmation of receipt within 10 business days and should follow up accordingly.

We will accept applications until February 28, 2027. Please note, due to a limited number of spaces in the program, not all students that meet the eligibility requirements will be accepted into the program.

For more information, contact the transition coordinator at steps@queensu.ca.